

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T STATE 094749

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, SO

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA- SOMALIA RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATIONS DURING EMPEROR' S VISIT
WASHINGTON ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED LITTLE
HOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT ETHIOPIAN- SOMALI RELATIONS ALTHOUGH
DOOR REMAINS OPEN.

2. QUESTION ETHIOPIAN- SOMALI RELATIONS ALSO RAISED BY
ACTING SECRETARY RUSH WITH EMPEROR DURING CALL MAY 15.
ACTING SECRETARY EXPLAINED WE HAD SOMEWHAT DIFFERING
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ASSESSMENT REGARDING SOMALI THREAT AND THE SOMALIS INSISTED TO US THEY HAD NO HOSTILE INTENT TOWARD ETHIOPIA. EMPEROR HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN PRESIDENT LENGTHY EXPOSITION ON HIS FEARS RESULTING FROM DELIVERIES SOPHISTICATED SOVIET ARMS TO SOMALIA. IN CONVERSATION WITH ACTING SECRETARY HE RETURNED BRIEFLY TO THIS THEME, STRESSING ETHIOPIA NOW WEAKER MILITARILY THAN SOMALIA AS A RESULT THESE DELIVERIES.

3. IN TWO SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS WITH ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM STRESSED SEVERE LIMITATION ON U. S. ABILITY PROVIDE EXTENSIVE NEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND NECESSITY THEREFORE FOR MOST PRECISE EVALUATION OF SOMALI THREAT POSSIBLE. NEWSOM STRESSED

THAT OUR INTELLIGENCE DID NOT SUGGEST EITHER TYPES OF EQUIPMENT OR NUMBERS GIVEN TO US BY ETHIOPIA. ADDED FACTOR WAS OUR BELIEF SOMALIS WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY USING EQUIPMENT. FOREIGN MINISTER STRESSED HE HAD SEEN MORE SOPHISTICATED TANKS IN SOMALI PARADE THAN ETHIOPIA POSSESSED. FURTHER, BETWEEN 2500 AND 3000 SOVIET TECHNICIANS NOW IN SOMALIA AND " NO ONE CAN SEE NATIONALITY OF SOMEONE SHOOTING FROM INSIDE A TANK." HE STATED ETHIOPIA HAD " GIVEN UP HOPE OF REACHING DIPLOMATIC UNDERSTANDING WITH SOMALIA SINCE SOMALIS ALWAYS BEGAN CONVERSATIONS BY ASKING FOR ONE THIRD OF ETHIOPIA."

4. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION NEWSOM ASKED MINISTER WHETHER EMPEROR WOULD SEE GENERAL SIAD IN ADDIS. MINISTER INSISTED DOOR WAS STILL OPEN BUT ON BASIS PAST EXPERIENCE IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE POSSIBILITY OF RESULTS.

5. ON BASIS THESE CONVERSATIONS DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMED SOMALI AMBASSADOR THAT CONVERSATIONS WITH EMPEROR WERE DEVOTED MAINLY TO BILATERAL ISSUES BUT THAT EMPEROR REFLECTED IN ALL CONVERSATIONS HIS SEVERE CONCERN OVER SOVIET ARMS SHIPMENTS TO SOMALIA. U. S. ESTIMATE IS THAT UNLESS SOMALIS CAN MORE EFFECTIVELY REASSURE ETHIOPIANS REGARDING THEIR PEACEFUL INTENT, RELATIONS WILL CONTINUE TO BE DIFFICULT. EMPEROR HAS NOT CLOSED DOOR TO

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FURTHER DISCUSSIONS AND IS PREPARED SEE GENERAL SIAD IN ADDIS. ETHIOPIANS REMAIN WILLING DISCUSS " BOUNDARIES" BUT UNWILLING DISCUSS TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS.

6. ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER INFORMED OF FOREGOING LINE WE INTENDED TAKE WITH SOMALIS AND AGREED IT WAS CORRECT STATEMENT. RUSH

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